

Application No.: 09/837,911

10

Docket No.: 495152000111

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In an Office Action dated October 9, 2003, claims 110-118 were rejected. By this amendment, claims 110 and 113 have been amended, and new claims 119-159 have been added. Claims 110-159 are now pending in the present application.

In the Office Action, claims 110-116 and 118 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,882,498 (the Dubin reference) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,176,667 (the Fairbairn reference). Claim 117 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dubin reference in view of the Fairbairn reference and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,477,440 (the Davis reference). Applicant requests reconsideration in view of the following remarks.

Independent claim 110 has been amended, in part, to include, "positioning the substrate within a bath in the first one of the stacked plating modules, the bath having a first wall and at least a second wall, wherein the first wall is adjacent to a first portion of the substrate and the at least second wall is adjacent to at least a second portion of the substrate when the substrate is positioned within the bath." Independent claim 113 has been amended, in part, to include "wherein each of the at least two plating baths includes a first wall and at least a second wall, wherein the first wall is adjacent to a first portion of the substrate and the at least second wall is adjacent to at least a second portion of the substrate when the substrate is positioned within the bath." Applicant asserts that the combination of the Dubin reference and the Fairbairn reference does not disclose or make obvious amended independent claims 110 and 113.

Additionally, new independent claim 142 includes, in part, "a first plating module having a bath divided by a first wall and at least a second wall, wherein the first wall is adjacent to a first portion of the substrate and the at least second wall is adjacent to at least a second portion of the substrate when the substrate is positioned within the bath." Applicant asserts that the combination of the Dubin reference and the Fairbairn reference does not disclose or make obvious new independent claim 142.

sf-1623274

Application No.: 09/837,911

11

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Applicant asserts that claims 111, 112, 119-129, which variously depend from independent claim 110, are allowable for at least the reason that they depend from an allowable independent claim. Claims 114-118, 130-141, which various depend from independent claim 113, are allowable for at least the reason that they depend from an allowable independent claim. Claims 143-159, which variously depend from independent claim 142, are allowable for at least the reason that they depend from an allowable independent claim.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and/or the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 495152000111. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Dated: January 7, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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sf-1623274